

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Federal-State Joint Board on)	CC Docket No. 96-45
Universal Service)	
)	
1998 Biennial Regulatory Review –)	CC Docket No. 98-171
Streamlined Contributor Reporting)	
Requirements Associated with Administration)	
of Telecommunications Relay Service, North)	
American Numbering Plan, Local Number)	
Portability, and Universal Service Support)	
Mechanisms)	
)	
Telecommunications Services for Individuals)	CC Docket No. 90-571
with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, and the)	
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)	
)	
Administration of the North American)	CC Docket No. 92-237
Numbering Plan and North American)	NSD File No. L-00-72
Numbering Plan Cost Recovery Contribution)	
Factor and Fund Size)	
)	
Number Resource Optimization)	CC Docket No. 99-200
)	
Telephone Number Portability)	CC Docket No. 95-116
)	
Truth-in-Billing and Billing Format)	CC Docket No. 98-170

ORDER

Adopted: March 27, 2003

Released: March 27, 2003

By the Deputy Chief, Telecommunications Access Policy Division:

Revised Filing Dates:

Comments Due: April 18, 2003

Reply Comments Due: May 16, 2003

1. In this Order, we grant requests from AT&T Corp. and WorldCom, Inc., for an extension of time to file comments and reply comments in response to a recent staff study on

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proposals to reform the Commission's universal service contribution methodology.¹ We also grant Sprint's request that parties be permitted to file a single document in response to the *Universal Service Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice* and the *Staff Study Public Notice*.²

2. On December 12, 2002, the Commission adopted modifications to the current revenue-based system for assessing contributions to the federal universal service mechanisms to ensure the sufficiency and predictability of universal service while it considers reforms the sustain the universal service fund for the long term.³ In addition to seeking comment on whether to retain a revenue-based system, the Commission invited comment on specific aspects of three connection-based proposals.⁴ The comment and reply comment dates for the *Universal Service Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice* are February 28, 2003, and April 18, 2003, respectively. On February 26, 2003, the Commission released a staff study that estimates potential assessment levels under the newly modified revenue-based system and three connection-based proposals to facilitate discussion and analysis of alternative contribution methodologies.⁵ The comment and reply comment dates for the *Staff Study Public Notice* are March 31, 2003, and April 18, 2003, respectively.

3. We hereby grant AT&T Corp.'s and WorldCom, Inc.'s request for extension of time to file comments and reply comments in response to the *Staff Study Public Notice*. It is the policy of the Commission that extensions of time are not routinely granted.⁶ We find, however, that there is good cause to extend the due dates for filing comments and reply comments to the *Staff Study Public Notice*. We understand that the Lotus spreadsheet that accompanies the staff study was not available for downloading from the Commission's website due to technical difficulties during the week of March 17, 2003. We also believe that granting a modest

¹ See AT&T Corp. and WorldCom, Inc., Motion for Extension of Time, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 98-171, 90-571, 92-237, 99-200, 95-116, 98-170, NSD File No. L-00-72, filed March 20, 2003 (*Motion for Extension of Time*). See also Ad Hoc Comments in Support of Motion for Extension of Time, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 98-171, 90-571, 92-237, 99-200, 95-116, 98-170, NSD File No. L-00-72, filed March 26, 2003.

² See Letter from Marybeth M. Banks, Sprint, to Marlene Dortch, Federal Communications Commission, filed March 14, 2003.

³ See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, 1998 Biennial Regulatory Review – Streamlined Contributor Reporting Requirements Associated with Administration of Telecommunications Relay Service, North American Numbering Plan, Local Number Portability, and Universal Service Support Mechanisms, Telecommunications Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Administration of the North American Numbering Plan and North American Numbering Plan Cost Recovery Contribution Factor and Fund Size, Number Resource Optimization, Telephone Number Portability, Truth-in-Billing and Billing Format*, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 98-171, 90-571, 92-237, 99-200, 95-116, 98-170, Report and Order and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 17 FCC Rcd 24952 (2002) (*Universal Service Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice*).

⁴ *Id.* at paras. 66-100.

⁵ See *Commission Seeks Comment on Staff Study Regarding Alternative Contribution Methodologies*, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 98-171, 90-571, 92-237, 99-200, 95-116, 98-170, Public Notice, FCC 03-31 (rel. Feb. 26, 2003) (*Staff Study Public Notice*).

⁶ See 47 C.F.R. § 1.46(a).

extension of time could facilitate the ability of parties to analyze the staff study. Accordingly, we grant AT&T Corp.'s and WorldCom, Inc.'s request. Parties may file comments to the *Staff Study Public Notice* by **April 18, 2003**, and reply comments by **May 16, 2003**.

4. We also grant Sprint's request that parties be permitted to file a single document in response to the *Universal Service Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice* and the *Staff Study Public Notice*. Grant of the requested relief will reduce administrative burdens for participants in this proceeding. We therefore grant Sprint's request and will permit parties to file a single document in response to the *Universal Service Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice* and the *Staff Study Public Notice*. Parties may file their combined *Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice* reply comments/*Staff Study* comments on April 18, 2003.

5. This matter shall continue to be treated as a "permit-but-disclose" proceeding in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.⁷ All other requirements discussed in the *Universal Service Contribution Methodology Second Further Notice* and *Staff Study Public Notice* shall remain in effect. For further information, please contact Sheryl Todd, Wireline Competition Bureau, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, 202-418-7400.

6. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to sections 4(i), 4(j), and 5(c) of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 154(j), 155(c), and sections 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.91, 0.291, 1.46, the request for extension of time filed by AT&T Corp. and WorldCom, Inc., IS GRANTED.

⁷ 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206.

7. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to sections 4(i), 4(j), and 5(c) of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 154(j), 155(c), and sections 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.91, 0.291, 1.46, the request filed by Sprint IS GRANTED.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Diane Law Hsu
Deputy Chief,
Telecommunications Access Policy Division